



IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

MINUTES MEETING NO. 1-26

Brad Little
Governor

Jeff Raybould
Chairman
St. Anthony
At Large

Jo Ann Cole-Hansen
Vice Chair
Lewiston
At Large

Dean Stevenson
Secretary
Paul
District 3

Dale Van Stone
Hope
District 1

Albert Barker
Boise
District 2

Brian Olmstead
Twin Falls
At Large

Marcus Gibbs
Grace
District 4

Patrick McMahon
Sun Valley
At Large

Water Center
Conference Rooms 602 B - D
322 E. Front Street
BOISE

January 23, 2026
Board Meeting No. 1-26

At 8:00 AM (MT) Chairman Raybould called the meeting to order in Boise, Idaho and on Zoom. The meeting was livestreamed on the Board's YouTube Channel after the executive session.

Agenda Item No. 1: Roll Call

Board Members Present

Jeff Raybould, Chairman
Jo Ann Cole-Hansen, Vice Chairman
Marcus Gibbs
Patrick McMahon
Brian Olmstead
Dean Stevenson, Secretary
Dale Van Stone

Staff Members Present

Matthew Weaver
Brian Patton
Shelley Keen
Cynthia Bridge Clark
Justin Ferguson
Wesley Hipke
Neeley Miller
Corri Parsley
Craig Saxton
Amy Cassel, *Online*

Public Present

Tony Dixie
Michael Foss
Brian Murdock

Agenda Item No. 2: Executive Session

At 8:03 AM, Mr. Stevenson moved to resolve into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1) subsection (f) to communicate with legal counsel regarding legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation or controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated Mr. Barker seconded. **Roll call vote**: Mr. Barker, aye; Ms. Cole-Hansen, aye; Mr. Gibbs, aye; Mr. McMahon, aye; Mr. Olmstead, aye; Mr. Stevenson, aye; Mr. Van Stone, aye; and Chairman Raybould, aye. 8 ayes. The motion passed.

Mr. Stevenson moved to resolve out of executive session at 8:18 AM. Mr. Van Stone seconded. **Voice vote**: All in favor. The motion carried. The executive session was closed to the public, and no action was taken during the executive session.

Agenda Item No. 3: Federal Affairs Update

At this time, Mark Limbaugh with the Ferguson Group, LLC., provided a federal affairs update to the Board. Mr. Limbaugh's PowerPoint included highlights related to the fiscal year 2026 appropriations, fiscal year 2026 Bureau of Reclamation Infrastructure Investment and Jobs ACT-Spending Plan, Inflation Reduction Act, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, and 2025 IWRB Federal Activities.

Following review and discussion, Chairman Raybould thanked Mr. Limbaugh for his report and moved to Agenda Item No. 4.

Agenda Item No. 4: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

However, it was noted that the public seated in the audience were in attendance to speak on Agenda Item No. 14, *Lost Valley Reservoir Enlargement Project*.

Agenda Item No. 5: Financial Report

Senior Planner, Neeley Miller provided a summary financial report, as of December 31, 2025, on the Idaho Water Resources Boards available and committed balances. Said funds were reported as follows: Secondary Aquifer Fund: cash balance \$40,429,679, committed \$23,991,776, and uncommitted \$16,437,904; Revolving Development Account: cash balance \$34,683,660, committed balance \$26,153,534, loan principal outstanding \$25,004,258, and uncommitted balance \$8,530,126; and Water Management Account: cash balance \$341,561,547, total committed funds \$335,488,695, and uncommitted funds \$6,072,855.

Agenda Item No. 6: 2026 Governor's Proposed Budget

IWRB Executive Manager, Brian Patton addressed the Board to provide an update on the Governor's IDWR Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2027.

Agenda Item No. 7: Quagga Mussel Treatment Update

Chief Treatment Engineer Jeremy Varley with the Idaho Department of Agriculture provided a PowerPoint presentation update on the changes related to the Quagga Mussel Treatment Project.

Following review, Chairman Raybould moved to Agenda Item No. 8.

Agenda Item No. 8: Idaho Code Cleanup

Addressing the Board, IDWR Deputy Director Shelley Keen provided an update review of the Department of Water Resources compliance with the Idaho Code Cleanup Act. Mr. Keen's presentation focused on the Idaho Code Cleanup Project, as it relates to the Idaho Legislature and related actions.

Mr. Keen conveyed that following IDWR's review, staff identified several statutes that were inactive and/or outdated, as well as statutes that enable the state to negotiate interstate compacts for Salmon Falls Creek and for the Columbia River Basin.

Following review, Chairman Raybould moved to the next order of business.

Agenda Item No. 9: Water Rights Backlog

IDWR Water Allocations Bureau Chief Craig Saxton provided a review on the 2026 Allocation Bureau Update. Mr. Saxton's PowerPoint presentation provided an overview of the Water Allocation Bureau, the Adjudication Program and Water Rights Program, Water Supply Bank Re-organization, the current workforce, and looking ahead to focus on department efficiency and productivity.

Following review and discussion, Chairman Raybould thanked staff for their efforts and moved to Agenda Item No. 10.

Agenda Item No. 10: State Water Plan Update

Senior Planner Neeley Miller provided the Board with a briefing update on the State Water Plan and the Eastern Snake River Aquifer (ESPA) Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan (CAMP) changes, notably, to address water supply challenges along the Eastern Snake plain and the Board's efforts to increase aquifer recharge goals from 250,000-acre feet to 350,000-acre feet. Said changes were submitted to the Legislature on January 9, 2026.

Addressing a question posed by Mr. Gibbs, IWRB Executive Manager, Brian Patton conveyed that the Legislature has not responded as to their actions on the State Water Plan (Plan); however, the Legislature can accept, amend, or reject it within 60 days by concurrent resolution or allow the 60 day time frame to run out, which would then result in the Plan being automatically accepted.

With no further discussion, Chairman Raybould moved to the next order of business.

Agenda Item No. 11: Anderson Ranch Dam Raise Update

Providing an update on the subject agenda item, Project Manager Justin Ferguson reviewed background details on the project and provided some recent updates related to staff activities and ongoing construction mitigation. Mr. Ferguson conveyed that staff proposes to schedule a potential Storage Committee meeting in early February to discuss the options to mitigate the potential impacts on stakeholders during construction.

Next, Mr. Ferguson advised that staff will review additional information regarding project design and updated cost estimates to present at a subsequent Committee meeting.

Agenda Item No. 12: Upper Sanke Basin Study

Joining the meeting, via Zoom, Project Manager Amy Cassel provided a brief update on staff's work on the Upper Snake Basin study. Following a chronological review of tasks completed, Ms. Cassell conveyed that staff's efforts have been focused on preparing the 15-page proposal, along with the Bureau of Reclamation, by the submission deadline of March 16, 2026.

Continuing, Ms. Cassel reviewed the timeline schedule of upcoming Committee and Board meetings with public comments and the Special Board meeting scheduled for February 10 for Board approval prior to the final submission target date of March 13, 2026.

Hearing no questions from the Board, Chairman Raybould thanked staff for their hard work and moved to take a recess comfort break.

Following the short recess, Chairman Raybould reconvened the meeting and continued to the next order of business, Agenda Item No. 13.

Agenda Item No. 13: Flood Grant Program Awards

IWRB Executive Manager, Brian Patton reported that the Financial Programs Committee recommended the Board approve the funding recommendation in the proposed resolution to award the package applications for a total of \$559,358.

At this time, Senior Planner Neely Miller provided a brief background on the Board's actions from round one of the grant applications which totaled eight applications and awarded \$460,646 by Resolution No. 33-2025. Continuing, Mr. Nelly then highlighted the supplemental round of grant applications for the Board's consideration by way of a resolution.

Ms. Cole-Hansen moved to adopt the resolution to award funds in the matter of Flood Management Grants in the amount of \$559,358. Mr. Stevenson seconded. **Roll call vote:** Mr. Barker, aye; Ms. Cole-Hansen, aye; Mr. Gibbs, aye; Mr. McMahon, aye; Mr. Olmstead, aye; Mr. Stevenson, aye; Mr. Van Stone, aye; and Chairman Raybould, aye. 8 ayes. The motion passed.

Agenda Item No. 14 Loan Program

a. Magic Valley Groundwater District (MVGWD)

b. Lost Valley Reservoir Enlargement Project

Project Manager Justin Ferguson addressed the Board to review new water project loan applications. The first was received from the MVGWD for \$10,000,000, the proposed project will construct an approximately 9-mile pressurized pipeline system and a pumping station to move water from Lake Walcott through the Minidoka Irrigation District delivery infrastructure to the MVGWD water users.

Addressing a question related to security, Mr. Ferguson conveyed that since the MVGWD is a government entity with taxing and assessment authority, shareholder assessments have been offered as collateral to secure the loan.

Following review of the resolution, Ms. Cole-Hansen moved to adopt the resolution to authorize loan funding for costs related to the Magic Valley Pumping Project. Mr. McMahon seconded. **Roll call vote:**

Mr. Barker, aye; Ms. Cole-Hansen, aye; Mr. Gibbs, aye; Mr. McMahon, aye; Mr. Olmstead, aye; Mr. Stevenson, abstain; Mr. Van Stone, aye; and Chairman Raybould, aye. 7 ayes. The motion passed

Moving on to the next loan application, Mr. Ferguson reported that the Lost Valley Reservoir Project proposes to raise and rebuild the existing dam structure to capture more storage water within the basin, increasing the current capacity of 10,000 AF to a total of 30,000 AF. The loan application request is in the amount of \$17,662,000, which would be for construction costs.

Following review of the term sheet updates and corresponding resolution, Chairman Raybould invited the guests in attendance for public comment.

Addressing the Board, the following speakers were heard in relation to public comment under the agenda item:

1. Mr. Jones
2. Mr. Lien

Following public comments and a brief discussion period, Mr. Olmstead moved to adopt the resolution to authorize loan funding for costs related to the Lost Valley Reservoir Project. Mr. Barker seconded.

Roll call vote: Mr. Barker, aye; Ms. Cole-Hansen, aye; Mr. Gibbs, aye; Mr. McMahon, aye; Mr. Olmstead, aye; Mr. Stevenson, aye; Mr. Van Stone, aye; and Chairman Raybould, aye. 8 ayes. The motion passed.

Agenda Item No. 15 Cloud Seeding Program Update

Cloud Seeding Program Manager Nick Banish provided a review and update of the Cloud Seeding Program for December 2025.

Following review and discussion, Chairman Raybould moved to Agenda Item No. 16.

Agenda Item No. 16 Cloud ESPA Recharge Program Update

Technical Programs Supervisor Matt Anders addressed the Board to speak on the agenda item. Mr. Anders provided a PowerPoint presentation update on the Managed Aquifer Recharge Program for 2025-2026. To conclude, Mr. Anders highlighted a summary of new proposed recharge projects presented at the Aquifer Stabilization Committee.

Next, Mr. Anders presented for the Board's consideration a funding request for proposed recharge projects by way of resolutions.

Following review of the resolutions, Mr. Van Stone moved to adopt the four resolutions to authorize and approve funds for the following Managed Recharge Projects: Bringham GWD Dubois & Riverside Site, Butte Market Lake Canal Improvements, Freemont Madison– Wilford Canal Pilot Project, and Southwest Searle Well. Mr. Stevenson seconded. **Roll call vote:** Mr. Barker, aye; Ms. Cole-Hansen, aye; Mr. Gibbs, aye; Mr. McMahon, aye; Mr. Olmstead, aye; Mr. Stevenson, aye; Mr. Van Stone, aye; and Chairman Raybould, abstain. 7 ayes. The motion passed.

Agenda Item No. 17 Potential Legislation of Interest

At this time, Deputy Attorney General Garrick Baxter provided the Board with a verbal update on legislation of interest to the Department of Water Resources.

Agenda Item No. 18 Director's Report

Director Mat Weaver did not have anything to report.

Agenda Item No. 19 Non-Action Items for Discussion

No items for discussion.

Agenda Item No. 20: Next Meeting and Adjourn

Mr. Patton stated the next regular Board meeting would be March 26-27, 2026, in Boise. Mr. Stevenson moved to adjourn. Mr. Van Stone seconded. **Voice vote**: All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:28 AM.

Respectfully submitted this 27th day of March 2026.



Dean Stevenson, *Secretary*



Milin J. Ream, *Administrative Assistant II*